DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 468 309 FL 027 388

AUTHOR	Yang, Nae-Dong
TITLE	Teachers' Beliefs about Language Learning and Teaching: A Cross-Cultural Comparison.
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	16p.; In: Proceedings for the Texas Foreign Language [Education] Conference (Austin, Texas, March 31-April 1, 2000); see FL 027 384.
PUB TYPE	Journal Articles (080) -- Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
JOURNAL CIT	Texas Papers in Foreign Language Education; v5 n1 p39-52 spec iss Fall 2000
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Beliefs; Child Development; Elementary School Teachers; Elementary Secondary Education; *English (Second Language); Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Preservice Teacher Education; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; Self Efficacy; *Student Teacher Attitudes; Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS	Taiwan

ABSTRACT

This study surveyed 68 Taiwanese preservice English elementary teachers regarding their beliefs about language learning and teaching. The survey examined their beliefs in five areas: child development, teaching English to children, teaching strategies and techniques, the nature of language learning, and self-efficacy and expectations. Data analysis indicated that the respondents shared several beliefs about child development (e.g., children's first language development is related to their second language learning). Most respondents believed that in learning English, younger is better, and more than half believed that people acquire language knowledge by repeatedly understanding expressions in the language that are a little beyond their current level of competence. Nearly all of the respondents felt that it is necessary to teach about foreign culture and that spelling and grammar should not be the first subjects to teach. Most believed that children acquire language by taking part in activities and that letting children use language to accomplish activities helps them learn. In general, the respondents had strong motivations and high expectations for becoming good elementary school English teachers. An appendix presents data on responses to each survey item. (Contains 21 references.) (SM)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 468 309

*Teachers' Beliefs About Language Learning and Teaching: A Cross-Cultural Comparison**

NAE-DONG YANG, National Taiwan University

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Mark A. Carpenter

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

FL027388

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

*Teachers' Beliefs About Language Learning and Teaching: A Cross-Cultural Comparison**

NAE-DONG YANG, National Taiwan University

Because English will be included in the required curriculum of all of Taiwan's elementary schools in 2001, a better understanding of the beliefs held by prospective primary school English teachers' about language learning and teaching would be beneficial. To investigate those beliefs, a questionnaire was developed and administered to 68 participants in a training program. The results of the survey are presented here and compared with the beliefs of language teachers in the U.S. Implications for teacher education programs are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

English education in Taiwan is entering a critical period. In the year 2001, English will soon be included in the required curriculum and taught to fifth and sixth graders of all Taiwan's elementary schools. The extension of English programs to primary schools nationwide has put the issue of teacher education in the spotlight. In the past, Taiwan's research attention focused mainly on professional preparation and qualifications for English teachers at the secondary and tertiary levels, but in recent English teaching conferences and publications in Taiwan, several language educators have discussed issues of elementary-school-level English curriculum, teaching methodology, and material development and selection (e.g., Lin, 1999; Shih, 1999; Yu, 1999). Even so, few studies have been conducted on the affect aspect of prospective teachers, such as their attitudes, motivations, and beliefs.

Much of the current literature on teacher education suggests that teachers' beliefs and attitudes play an important role in their decision-making and teaching practice (Williams & Burden, 1997). According to Richardson (1996), *belief* refers to psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are felt to be true. As Richards and Lockhart (1996) have indicated, teachers' actions reflect their knowledge and beliefs. Also, these teachers' knowledge and beliefs "provide the underlying framework or schema which guides the teachers' classroom actions" (Richards & Lockhart, 1996, p. 29). Pajares (1992), in reviewing the literature on teachers' beliefs, went further and concluded that teachers' beliefs had a greater influence than teachers' knowledge on their lesson planning, decision-making, and general classroom practice.

Johnson (1994) studied preservice ESL teacher's beliefs and found these beliefs about second language teaching were affected by prior experiences within formal language classrooms. Mok (1994) also indicated that teacher's beliefs about teaching were guided by their previous experience as a learner and as a teacher. Horwitz (1985) found that prospective foreign language teachers have

* Presented at the Texas Foreign Language Education Conference 2000 (TexFLEC 2000), University of Texas at Austin, March 31-April 1, 2000.

-027388

many preconceived ideas about how languages are learned and how they should be taught. She pinpointed the possible interfering effect of these preconceived beliefs on prospective teachers' understanding and receptivity to the information and techniques presented in the teacher education program.

Because learners' beliefs are important determinants of their behavior, teacher's beliefs play a critical role in improving second language instruction. Uncovering these beliefs can contribute to an understanding of how to refine and improve teaching and learning in a school environment (Kleinsasser, 1993). An examination of these prospective primary school English teachers' beliefs about language learning and teaching can also benefit the teacher trainer and trainees. This paper, therefore, focuses on the investigation of these prospective English teachers' beliefs about language learning and especially their beliefs about teaching English to children. In addition, comparisons of teachers' beliefs will be made between these Taiwanese prospective teachers with foreign language teachers in the U.S. for better understanding.

Description of Study

Subjects

A total of 68 subjects from a primary-school English teacher training program participated in the study. Among the 68 trainees (from two classes), there were 5 males (7%) and 63 females (93%). All the trainees had passed the English proficiency test given by the Language Testing and Teaching Center on behalf of the Ministry of Education. Their English oral proficiency was rated above Level 2. All of the subjects, therefore, waived the additional 240-hour language courses. Over two-thirds of the subjects (68%) had stayed in English-speaking countries for an average of 6.7 years. About two-thirds (66%) also had experience teaching English. To the question whether they had experience teaching English to children, 50 percent said yes, 49 percent said no, and one person did not answer.

Instrument

A questionnaire was developed to survey the prospective English teachers' beliefs in five major areas: (1) child development, (2) teaching English to children, (3) teaching strategies and techniques, (4) the nature of language learning, and (5) self-efficacy and expectations. Some items were adopted or modified from Horwitz's Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) (Horwitz, 1987). Other items were written by the author based on a literature review on teaching English to children (e.g., Dunn, 1983; Halliwell, 1992; Philips, 1993) and related fields (e.g., Berk, 1997; Brown, 1994).

In the questionnaire, the subjects were asked to read a statement, such as "It's better to use English from the first lesson." Then, the subjects decided if they (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) agree, or (5) strongly agree with the statement. Since the questionnaire was designed to assess pro-

spective English teachers' beliefs and opinions, it did not yield a composite score; rather, responses to the individual items revealed prospective teachers' views of language learning and teaching.

Procedures

The subjects completed the questionnaire during the first week of the training session. The questionnaire data was coded and keyed in to computer files. The data was then analyzed descriptively by calculating percentages and mean scores. In addition, the learning diaries of the subjects were collected and analyzed as supplementary information.

RESULTS

The section will discuss the results of the survey, which consist of four major areas: (1) general beliefs about child development, (2) general beliefs about language learning, (3) specific beliefs about teaching English to children, and (4) self-efficacy and expectation (See Appendix A). In the discussion below, the subjects' 1 and 2 responses to the Likert scale (Strongly Disagree and Disagree) are presented together, as are their 4 and 5 responses (Agree and Strongly Agree). This combination has been done in order to allow generalizations about overall trends in the subjects' responses.

General Beliefs about Child Development

The prospective teachers shared several similar beliefs about child development. For example, most (73%) agreed that children's first-language development is related to their second-language acquisition. This accords with the common belief that the degree to which children can use their first language to communicate will reflect on their ability to acquire the second language (Dunn, 1983). In addition, about two-thirds (66%) of the prospective teachers endorsed the concept of individual difference and agreed that young children have great individual differences in their cognitive development. They believed that individual children learn and react to school differently (97%). These beliefs were mentioned and discussed by several trainees when they wrote about the most important issues they considered in teaching English to children. Over three-quarters of the prospective teachers (79%) also agreed that boys and girls would develop at different rates and react in different ways.

These prospective teachers, however, thought differently about children's physical development. Fewer than one half (46%) agreed that children's muscular development might affect their ability to read, whereas 25% were neutral and 28% disagreed with the statement [1]. As Dunn stated in his book, *Beginning English with Young Children*, "Not only cognitive development but also physical development plays an important role in determining what activities are right for the young child" (Dunn, 1983, P. 14). It may be the case that, if teachers believe it is a part of natural development for children to have difficulty sitting still, then those teachers will

feel strongly that "classroom activities need to give children an opportunity to move around within the classroom." Among the respondents, 64% agreed, 21% were neutral, and 16% disagreed with the previous statement.

Adults and the society and culture in which the child lives can affect not only the child's development but also his or her success in learning a foreign language (Berk, 1997; Dunn, 1983). Many of the prospective teachers believed in the great influence of the children's parents, for 95% agreed that "if parents are interested in their children's achievement in English and show appreciation of their success, the children will be motivated." Also, 92% of the prospective teachers agreed that people in Taiwan feel that it is important to be able to speak English. This positive attitude toward English from most Taiwanese people might affect their children's English learning. Some subjects in this study believed in the teacher's influence, as 74% thought that "young children are eager to build up a relationship with their teacher." In view of the possible influence from local culture on the children as well as the majority of the imported ESL or English materials and textbooks available in the market, over one half (59%) of the respondents considered it would be unrealistic to expect young beginners in Taiwan to respond to material and activities in the classroom like an American, Australian, or English child of the same age, though 28% disagreed with the idea.

General Beliefs about Language Learning

Most of the prospective teachers (81%) believed that in learning English, younger is better. It is thus not surprising to find that 70% of the teachers agreed that it is best to learn English starting in primary school. Most teachers believed that children are different from adults in terms of learning foreign languages, for 84% of the respondents disagreed that children learn English the same way as the adults. About 59% agreed that anyone can learn to speak English well, while 29% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Only 12% disagreed.

As for the nature of learning a language, more than half (56%) believed that we acquire language knowledge by repeatedly understanding expressions in the language that are "a little beyond" our current level of competence, whereas 32% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Most subjects agreed that one "can't learn without practice" (94%), one learns English "through interacting with other people" (90%), one learns quickly when one understands (88%), and "entertainment will speed up the learning process" (81%). Only 29% agreed "there is a secret in learning English quickly," whereas 46% disagreed with the statement and 25% were neutral. A large majority (95%) rejected the statement that "we learn English only through the ears," and over three quarters (78%) also disagreed that "we don't have to memorize anything to learn English." These teachers also cared about students'

correctness in learning pronunciation, for 63% agreed that if beginning students were permitted to make errors in English pronunciation without correction, it would be difficult for them to correct those errors later on.

Specific Beliefs about Teaching English to Children

To teach English to children, these teachers generally agreed that it is necessary to teach about foreign culture (90%). They believed that spelling and grammar should not be the first subjects to teach (85%). Most of them agreed that the most important part of teaching children English is oral communication skills (79% agreed), not vocabulary (82% disagreed).

As to the importance of teaching other English skills to children, these teachers held varied views. For example, 43% agreed that pronunciation is the most important part of teaching children English, while 31% were neutral, and 26% disagreed with that statement. Listening comprehension was considered the most important component by 37% of the respondents, while 38% neither agreed nor disagreed and 25% disagreed with that statement. Only 46% agreed that sounds, words, and grammar should be taught together, whereas 18% were neutral and 35% disagreed with that statement.

The prospective teachers shared several specific beliefs about the way to teach English to children. The majority believed that children acquired language by taking part in activities (90%) and that letting the children use language to accomplish activities helps them learn (99%). Although games are popular in many children's private language schools in Taiwan, 96% of the prospective teachers believed that not all games are suitable for young beginners, and 80% believed that games are most useful if they consolidate language items. The prospective teachers were also positive about the use of multimedia (such as tapes, video tapes, CD ROM) to teach children English. Thus, 85% of the respondents agreed with its use in the primary classrooms. On the other hand, only half agreed that it is better to use English from the first lesson.

Self-Efficacy and Expectation

In general, the prospective teachers had strong motivations and high expectations of becoming good primary school English teachers. Many of them (95%, of which 63% indicated strong agreement) felt that they wanted to be a good primary school English teacher and considered teaching English in the primary school as "valuable" (92%) and "a good job" (50%). Although a large number of them (83%) rejected the idea that teaching English was or would be easy, most of them (82%) were confident in becoming good English teachers to children and 75% believed they could teach children English very well. About 82% felt comfortable with children and 79% said they liked children a lot. In addition, 62% believed that teaching English in the primary school was or would be "a lot of fun." These positive attitudes and beliefs toward themselves and teaching tasks reflected the enormous enthusiasm of

the prospective teachers in the beginning of the training program.

COMPARISONS WITH OTHER STUDIES

Because few studies have examined teachers' beliefs about teaching English to children in particular, this paper will attempt to compare, in terms of similar belief items, the beliefs of the prospective teachers in this study with those of foreign language teachers in other studies, particularly Horwitz (1985), and Kern (1995).

Comparisons with Horwitz's Study Results

Horwitz (1985) used two instruments, the Foreign Language Survey (FLAS) and the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), to elicit prospective foreign language teachers' beliefs about language learning and teaching. As details of the specific beliefs were not reported in the 1985 paper, this researcher made only a rough comparison and found three major similarities between the two groups of prospective teachers: First, Horwitz found that the prospective foreign language teachers in her methods class, like many other Americans, felt it is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language. Similarly, in this study, most of the prospective Taiwanese elementary-school English teachers did not think that children learn English the same way as adults do (84%) and they believed that younger is better in learning English (81%). Moreover, Horwitz found her methods students consistently agreed that it was important "to listen and repeat a lot" and to practice in the language lab, while the prospective teachers in this study also were positive about the importance of practice and using multimedia for practice. Furthermore, the prospective teachers in Horwitz's method class generally felt strongly that it is the teacher's responsibility to motivate students, whereas a large number of the prospective teachers reported in their learning diaries that to motivate students and to develop their interest in learning English is one of the most important issues in teaching English to children.

While the prospective teachers in Horwitz's study commonly believed that the languages they were preparing to teach were relatively easy ones, only 4% of the prospective teachers in this study considered English as easy to teach in the primary schools. Most of them (83%) disagreed and felt English is not easy. This feeling might not just be due to the difficulty of the language they are to teach, but it might also be related to their great expectations of themselves and of the task of teaching English in the primary schools (see previous section on "self-efficacy and expectation"). Another explanation might be found from the learning diary entries of the prospective teachers' about the most important issues in teaching children English. Many teachers provided lists of various qualifications and requirements for a good primary school English teacher, which revealed these prospective teachers' ardent anticipation, and a little anxiety, toward becoming good primary English teachers.

Comparisons with Kern's Study

Kern (1995) studied the beliefs of 12 French instructors and 288 students beliefs about language learning in an American university setting. When Kern's results are compared with those of this study, especially in regard to teachers' beliefs about language learning and teaching, one can find three major similarities.

First, all instructors in Kern's study agreed that it is important to repeat and practice a lot, whereas 94% of the prospective teachers in this study thought that one cannot learn without practice. Eighty-four percent of the university instructors agreed that it is important to practice in the language laboratory while 85% of the prospective elementary-school English teachers felt that it is important to use multimedia (such as audiotapes, videotapes, and CD ROM) to teach children English.

Second, the majority of the university instructors rejected the statement that learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words (92%) or grammar rules (83%), and the prospective teachers in this study held similar views. They disagreed with the statement that the most important part of teaching children is vocabulary (82%), and they felt spelling and grammar should not the first subject to teach (46%).

The third similarity between the beliefs of college instructors and the prospective elementary-school teachers concerns age and language learning. Most of the prospective teachers believed that, in learning English, younger is better (81%) and that it is best to learn English from primary school (70%), while 67% of the college instructors agreed that it is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.

On the other hand, college instructors differed from the prospective elementary school English teachers in two respects. While 90% of the prospective teachers believed that it is necessary to teach foreign culture when teaching English, the college instructors were less enthusiastic about teaching culture. Only 25% felt that it is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak a foreign language, while 58% were neutral and 17% disagreed. In addition, the college instructors were more relaxed about correcting students' mistakes, for only a fourth of them felt that, if a learner was allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it would be hard to get rid of those mistakes later on. Half of them disagreed with the statement and the remaining fourth neither agreed nor disagreed.

All of the college instructors disagreed with the idea that one should not say anything in the language until one can say it correctly. In contrast, the Taiwanese prospective teachers were more concerned with the students' English errors, especially in pronunciation. This belief is similar to that held by Taiwanese college students in previous studies (e.g., Yang, 1999). Over 80% of college students and 63% of the prospective teachers agreed that it would be difficult for beginning students to correct English

errors later on if they were permitted to make those errors early.

IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Limitations of the Study

This study used a questionnaire, mostly developed by the researcher (and instructor), to investigate beliefs about language learning and teaching held by the prospective primary-school English teachers in the training program. Owing to characteristics of retrospective self-reports, some information may be missing when reporting (Garner, 1988). In addition, these teachers' beliefs may change during and after the training session. It should also noted that the results are based on a small sample of the prospective teachers in the training program. Thus, the generalization of the results to other populations in different teaching contexts, such as high school or university level, may be limited.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study has attempted to examine the prospective primary school English teachers' beliefs about their students' cognitive and physical development, about the nature of language learning, about the task of teaching English to children, and about themselves as primary-school English teachers. Further research could be conducted concerning the consistency between beliefs and actions. In addition, to examine the changes of beliefs held by the prospective teachers, a similar questionnaire could be administered at the end of the training program. It would be interesting to compare the differences between the two results.

To make further comparisons, the beliefs questionnaire used in this study could be administered to prospective English teachers in different contexts or to pre-service foreign language teachers in the United States.

Instructional Implications

The results of this study have the following instructional implications:

1. ***Examining teachers' beliefs first.***

In discussing teacher education, there are no simple answers to the question of what makes a good teacher, so how can we know what makes a good primary-school English teacher? A helpful approach to answering the question, as suggested by Williams and Burden (1997), seems to lie within the area of teachers' beliefs. Williams and Burden indicated that teachers' beliefs about what learning is, whether implicit or explicit, "affect everything that they do in the classroom" (pp. 56-57). One prospective teacher echoed the same point in her learning diary:

> What we believe about how children acquire a [second/foreign] language will pretty much determine our attitude and approaches to teaching English to kids. And this belief will greatly contribute or do harm to under

> standing and flexibility in students' learning career and our teaching career.

Therefore, studies that focus on teachers' beliefs about learners, learning, and themselves and examine the consistency with which teachers' actions reflect what they claim to believe would provide helpful information to effective teaching. Informal examination of teachers' beliefs is also beneficial for language teachers themselves. As the same prospective teacher wrote in her learning diary,

> I believe our beliefs decide what we do and how we do it. . . . . I think a good way to examine our beliefs is to see if our beliefs have created understanding and inspired learning in the classroom, or, on the contrary, created misunderstanding, discouragement (on either side), or even worse.

Also, as Horwitz (1985) indicated, making the prospective teachers' belief system explicit is the first step in their development as foreign language teachers. Effort should, therefore, be made to assess the prospective teachers' beliefs about language learning and teaching.

2. ***Reflecting on one's teaching critically.***

In this study, the prospective teachers' positive attitudes and their strong beliefs toward themselves and their teaching tasks were a welcome signs. They reflected the great enthusiasm and the sometime unrealistic expectations of most trainees in the beginning of the training program. Later in the training session, some of the prospective teachers became frustrated when they realized that, contrary to their expectations, some teaching methods would not work as well as they thought. They also discovered that, when they teach in primary schools, they might face strange teaching-learning environments and cultures that differ from their familiar English learning environments abroad or in the university. How to bridge the gap between their expectation and reality becomes an important issue for teacher educators and teachers-to-be to deal with.

On possible way to bridge the gap and to improve their future teaching practice is to have both the training instructors and the prospective teachers engage in a shared "multilevel process of action, monitoring, reflection, feedback and further action" (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 55). During the process of critical reflection, prospective teachers need to learn to be "reflective practitioners" (Schon, 1983) who consistently generate questions and critically reflect on their teaching practices. In other words, prospective teachers should be aware of their belief systems and constantly monitor how far their actions—that is, teaching practices—reflect those beliefs or are in keeping with them. They may also adjust some of their previous beliefs if possible. This critical reflection can first be conducted between the training instructors and the prospective teachers during the training program and then

gradually carried on by the prospective teachers independently.

3. Changing beliefs gradually.

The next step would be to change these teachers' beliefs. This change should not be an impossible mission, because the beliefs are largely developed and learned, not genetically endowed. Researchers have offered suggestions on how to change beliefs, such as through implementing specific teacher education programs (e.g., Richardson, 1996; Pennington, 1989). The various beliefs revealed in this study also provided a good source of information for the training instructors. As suggested by Horwitz (1985), these teachers' beliefs about language learning and teaching were greatly influenced by their previous learning experiences. As a consequence, the best way to deal with various views toward a certain teaching method is to help the prospective teachers move in developmental stages, not to directly contradict their deep-rooted beliefs. Moreover, some principles and guidelines on learner training can be applied to teacher training. Therefore, the prospective teachers were encouraged to discuss their views in the learning diaries (e.g., Yang, 1998). Related theories and concepts were later introduced in the training courses. As one prospective teacher suggested, "I guess the best thing we could do to make our beliefs related to teaching not so subjective is to base our beliefs as widely on knowledge, new information, and experience as possible."

In short, it is essential to examine language teachers' beliefs and reflect critically on the effectiveness of these beliefs based on teachers' actual teaching practices. Teacher education should pay attention to ineffectual beliefs of their prospective teachers and confront erroneous beliefs with new information and knowledge.

NOTE:

[1] The percentage has been rounded to nearest whole number. Thus, the percentage may not add up to 100%.

REFERENCES

Berk, L. (1997). *Child Development* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Brown, H. (1994). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (3rd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Regents.

Cotterall, S. (1999). Key variables in language learning: What do learners believe about them. *System, 27,* 493-513.

Dunn, O. (1983). *Beginning English with young children.* London: Macmillan Publishers Limited.

Garner, R. (1988). Verbal-report data on cognitive and metacognitive strategies. In C. E. Weinstein, E. T. Goetz, & P. A. Alexander (Eds.), *Learning and study strategies: Issues in assessment, instruction, and evaluation* (pp. 63-76). San Diego: Academic Press.

Halliwell, S. (1992). *Teaching English in the primary classroom.* Essex: Longman.

Horwitz, E. (1985). Using student beliefs about language learning and teaching in the foreign language

methods course. *Foreign Language Annals, 18,* 333-340.

Horwitz, E. (1987). Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In A. L. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 119-129). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Lin, C. (1999). *Teacher preparation: Preparing what for prospective teachers?* Paper presented in the Conference on English Teacher Education for the 21st Century, Taipei, Taiwan.

Pajares, M. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: Clearing up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research, 62,* 307-332.

Pennington, M. (1989). Faculty development from language programs. In R. K. Johnson (Ed.), *The second language curriculum* (pp. 91-110). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Philips, S. (1993). *Young learners.* Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.

Richards, J. & Lockhart, C. (1996). *Reflective teaching in second language classrooms.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richardson, V. (1996). The role of attitudes and beliefs in learning to teach. In J. Sikula, T. J. Buttery, and E. Guyton (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 102-119). New York: Macmillan Library Reference.

Savignon, S. J. (1976). On the other side of the desk: A look at teacher attitude and motivation in second-language learning. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 32,* 295-304.

Schon, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action.* New York: Basic Books.

Shih, Y. H. (1999). *Criterion for evaluating primary school English textbooks.* Paper presented at the eighth International Symposium and Book Fair on English Teaching, Taipei, Taiwan.

Williams, M. & Burden, R. (1997). *Psychology for language teachers: A social constructivist approach.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yang, N. (1998). Exploring a new role for teachers: Promoting learner autonomy. *System, 26,* 127-135.

Yang, N. (1999). The relationship between EFL learnersÆ beliefs and learning strategy use. *System, 27,* 515-535.

Yu, C. (1999). *A study on the primary ELT curriculum: What is good primary practice.* Paper presented at the eighth International Symposium and Book Fair on English Teaching, Taipei, Taiwan.

APPENDIX A
THE RESPONSE (IN %) TO EACH ITEM IN THE BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING CHILDREN ENGLISH SURVEY

No	Item Description	1 [a] Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
I	**Beliefs About Child Development**							
12.	If parents are interested in their children's achievement in English and show appreciation of the success, the children will be motivated.	0 [b]	1	3	41	54	4.49	0.63
20.	Individual children learn and react to school differently.	1	1	0	47	50	4.43	0.72
13.	People in Taiwan feel that it is important to be able to speak English.	3	3	3	49	43	4.25	0.89
3.	Boys and girls develop at different rates and react in different ways.	1	4	15	53	26	3.99	0.86
4.	Young children have great individual differences in their cognitive development.	0 [c]	12	21	41	25	3.88	1.14
9.	Young children are eager to build up a relationship with their teacher.	0	10	16	52	22	3.85	0.89
17.	How children can use their first language to communicate is related to their ability to acquire the second language.	4	4	18	63	10	3.71	0.88
8.	Classroom activities need to give children an opportunity to move around within the classroom.	3	13	21	53	10	3.54	0.95
10.	It is not realistic to expect young beginners in Taiwan to respond to material and activities in the classroom like an American, Australian, or English child of the same age.	7 [c]	21	12	43	16	3.49	1.38
11.	Muscular development may affect a child's ability for reading.	9 [c]	19	25	40	6	3.24	1.29
II	**General Beliefs About Language Learning**							
31	We can't learn without practice.	1	1	3	28	66	4.56	0.76
38	We learn English through interacting with other people.	0	1	9	41	49	4.37	0.71
32	Entertainment speeds up the learning process.	0 [c]	4	13	50	31	4.16	0.99

APPENDIX A (CONTINUED)

No	Item Description	1 [a] Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
30	In learning English, younger is better.	0	4	15	43	38	4.15	0.83
33	Learning takes place quickly when people understand.	0	4	7	62	26	4.10	0.72
43	Everyone can learn to speak English well.	0	12	29	46	13	3.60	0.87
25	If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English pronunciation without correction, it will be difficult for them to correct later on.	6	18	13	37	26	3.60	1.22
5	We acquire by understanding language that is "a little beyond" our current level of competence.	3	9	32	50	6	3.47	0.85
24	There is a secret in learning English quickly.	9	37	25	22	7	2.82	1.11
28	Children learn English the same way as the adults.	22 [c]	62	6	4	4	2.16	1.25
26	We don't have to memorize anything to learn English.	28	50	7	10	4	2.13	1.08
7	We learn English only through the ears.	66	29	1	0	3	1.44	0.80
III	**Specific Beliefs about Teaching Children English**							
39	Let the children use language to accomplish something will help them learn.	0	0	1	43	56	4.54	0.53
14	Not all games are suitable for young beginners.	1 [c]	0	1	56	40	4.41	0.87
35	It is necessary to teach about foreign culture when teaching English.	0	3	7	53	37	4.24	0.71
2	Children acquire language by taking part in activities.	3	1	6	49	41	4.24	0.87
41	Spelling and grammar should not be the first thing to teach.	0	4	10	54	31	4.12	0.76
45	It is important to use multi-media (such as tapes, video tapes, CD ROM) to teach children English.	0	6	9	54	31	4.10	0.79
44	Games are most useful if they consolidate language items.	0 [c]	6	13	56	24	4.06	0.99
42	The most important part of teaching children English is oral communication skills.	3	7	10	50	29	3.96	0.98
46	It is best to learn English from primary school.	0	9	22	49	21	3.81	0.87

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE 1 (CONTINUED)

No	Item Description	1 [a] Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
19	It's better to use English from the first lesson.	3	16	31	40	10	3.38	0.98
23	Sounds, words, and grammar should be taught together, not separately.	9 [c]	26	18	31	15	3.25	1.42
40	The most important part of teaching children English is pronunciation.	4	22	31	31	12	3.24	1.07
36	The most important part of teaching children English is listening comprehension.	4	21	38	28	9	3.16	1.00
29	The most important part of teaching children English is vocabulary.	25	57	12	4	1	2.00	0.83
IV	**Self-Efficacy And Expectation**							
37	I want to be a good primary school English teacher.	0	0	4	32	63	4.59	0.58
16	Teaching English in the primary school is valuable.	0	0	9	46	46	4.37	0.64
22	I am confident in becoming a good English teacher to children.	0	3	15	53	29	4.09	0.75
15	I am comfortable with children.	1	3	13	54	28	4.04	0.82
34	I like children a lot.	0	1	19	54	25	4.03	0.71
18	I believe I can teach children English very well.	0	1	24	46	29	4.03	0.77
21	Teaching English in the primary school is (or will be) a lot of fun.	1	4	32	52	10	3.65	0.79
27	Teaching English in primary school is a good job.	0	9	41	38	12	3.53	0.82
6	Teaching English in the primary school is (or will be) easy.	34	49	13	1	3	1.91	0.89

Notes:

[a] 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither disagree nor agree, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly agree.

[b] The percentage has been rounded to nearest whole number.

[c] There is one person who did not answer this question (1%).

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

[X] This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

[ ] This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").